



**Testimony of
Bart Russell, Executive Director
Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Planning & Development Committee
February 14, 2011**

- **SB- 402 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SINGLE MUNICIPAL WEB PORTAL.**
- **SB-519 AN ACT CONCERNING E-GOVERNMENT.**
- **HB-5178 (COMM) AN ACT AUTHORIZING NOTICE OF ZONE CHANGES TO BE SENT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL.**
- **HB-5256 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING RECEIPT BY ELECTRONIC MAIL OF MUNICIPAL TAX BILLS.**

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) *strongly supports the above-referenced bills* which will allow towns to achieve cost savings and improve efficiency through the use of electronic technology.

SB-402 calls for the state to develop a single web portal to assist towns in using technology to provide services. This would be helpful to ensure that towns can access information on how to best incorporate technology into town halls to better serve the public.

SB-519 calls for the expansion of e-government technology services that are designed to improve and foster communication between residents and their local government. We encourage the state to pursue this initiative and look forward to working with lawmakers to outline legislation in this area.

HB-5178 permits notice of proposed zone changes to be sent electronically to regional planning agencies rather than by certified mail. This would not only reduce costs for towns and taxpayers but would also make it easier to track proposed zone changes. In today's world, allowing notices to be sent electronically should be a no-brainer. This will allow towns to save on printing and mailing costs and free up the time and resources of staff.

HB-5256 allows towns to send tax notices via electronic mail. This is another measure that would help reduce costs for the town and its taxpayers and improve the efficiency of the process. Given that more and more people prefer to receive their information electronically, these measures should be common sense options for towns.